

REMARKS

In accordance with the foregoing, claims 2, 7 and 9 have been amended. Claim 2 has been amended to substantially include the limitations of claim 3. Claim 7 has been amended to substantially include the limitations of claim 8, and claim 9 has been amended to substantially include the limitations of claim 10. Claims 1, 3-6, 8 and 10 have been cancelled. Claims 2, 7 and 10 are pending and under consideration.

The applicant replaces Abstract with the amended Abstract attached. The amended abstract addresses item 1 of the office action.

Claims 1, 2, 4-7 and 9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,559,911 to Arakawa et al. Claims 3, 8 and 10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious over Arakawa et al. in view of "applicant's admitted prior art (APA)."

Referring to Fig. 10 of the reference, Arakawa et al. discloses an LCD cell 30 and a light source 20 with a polarization light splitting film 10 interposed therebetween. The polarization light splitting film 10 is shown in Fig. 4 and includes a polarization film 1 and a prismatic light control element 6. The Examiner admits that Arakawa et al. fails to disclose a light scattering pattern provided on an emission face of the light guide plate.

Arakawa et al. has light diffusion elements 23 formed on a back side (not an emission face) of the light guide 22. These light diffusion elements are not a light scattering pattern for promoting emission. Column 1, lines 43 through 46 of the reference describe that a portion of the light in the light guide 22 is diffused or scattered upwards by light diffusion elements 23. With the present invention, the light scattering pattern has two important functions. The light scattering pattern prevents the appearance of periodically repeated rows of the prismatic element. The periodically repeated rows tend to be particularly conspicuous to a viewer when the prismatic light control element is formed directly on the LCD panel with no medium, such as an air layer, existing between the prismatic light control element and the LCD panel.

The double effect of the light scattering pattern, namely promotion of emission and preventing the viewer from seeing the projection rows through the panel, are disclosed in neither Arakawa et al. nor in APA. Accordingly, the prior art rejections should be withdrawn as they apply to claim 2.

With regard to claim 7 and 9, these claims describe that the liquid crystal device employs a unified composite optical element. Fig. 4 of Arakawa et al. discloses a composite optical element including a prismatic light control element.

However, Arakawa et al. does not disclose or suggest separating the surface light source device from the projection rows of the prismatic light control element by a distance of 0.5 to 1mm. Please note that such a gap may be occupied by air to effectively avoid contact between the projection rows of the prismatic light control element and the emission face of the light guide plate. The distance of 0.5 to 1mm avoids contact without excessively increasing the depth or thickness of the LCD device. Neither Arakawa et al. nor APA disclose or suggest including a gap of 0.5 to 1mm between an emission face and projection rows of a unified composite optical element as claimed. Accordingly, the prior art rejections as they relate to claims 7 and 9 should be withdrawn.

There being no further outstanding objections or rejections, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. An early action to that effect is courteously solicited.

Finally, if there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

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